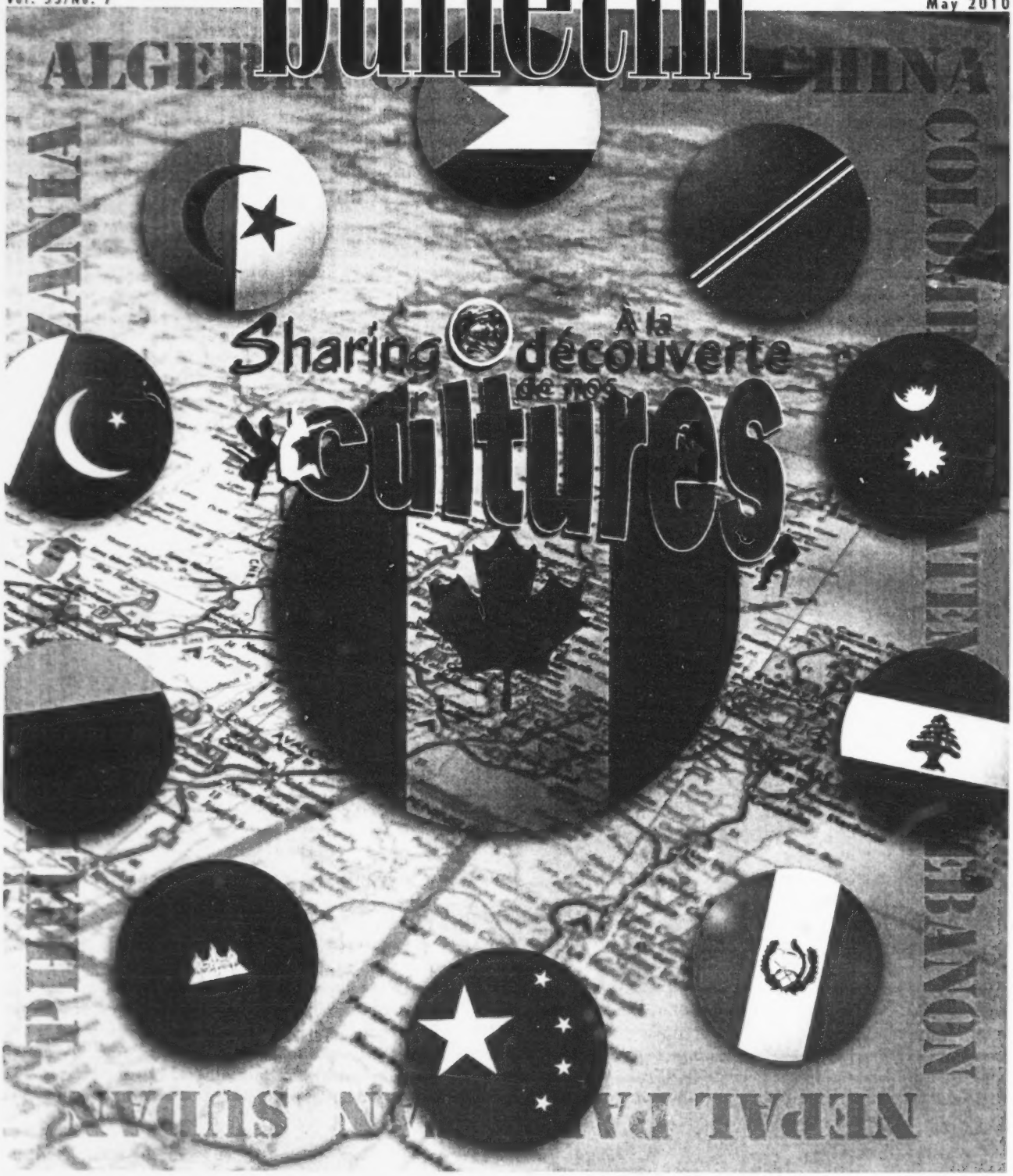
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

THE

bulletin

Vol. 53/No. 7

May 2010



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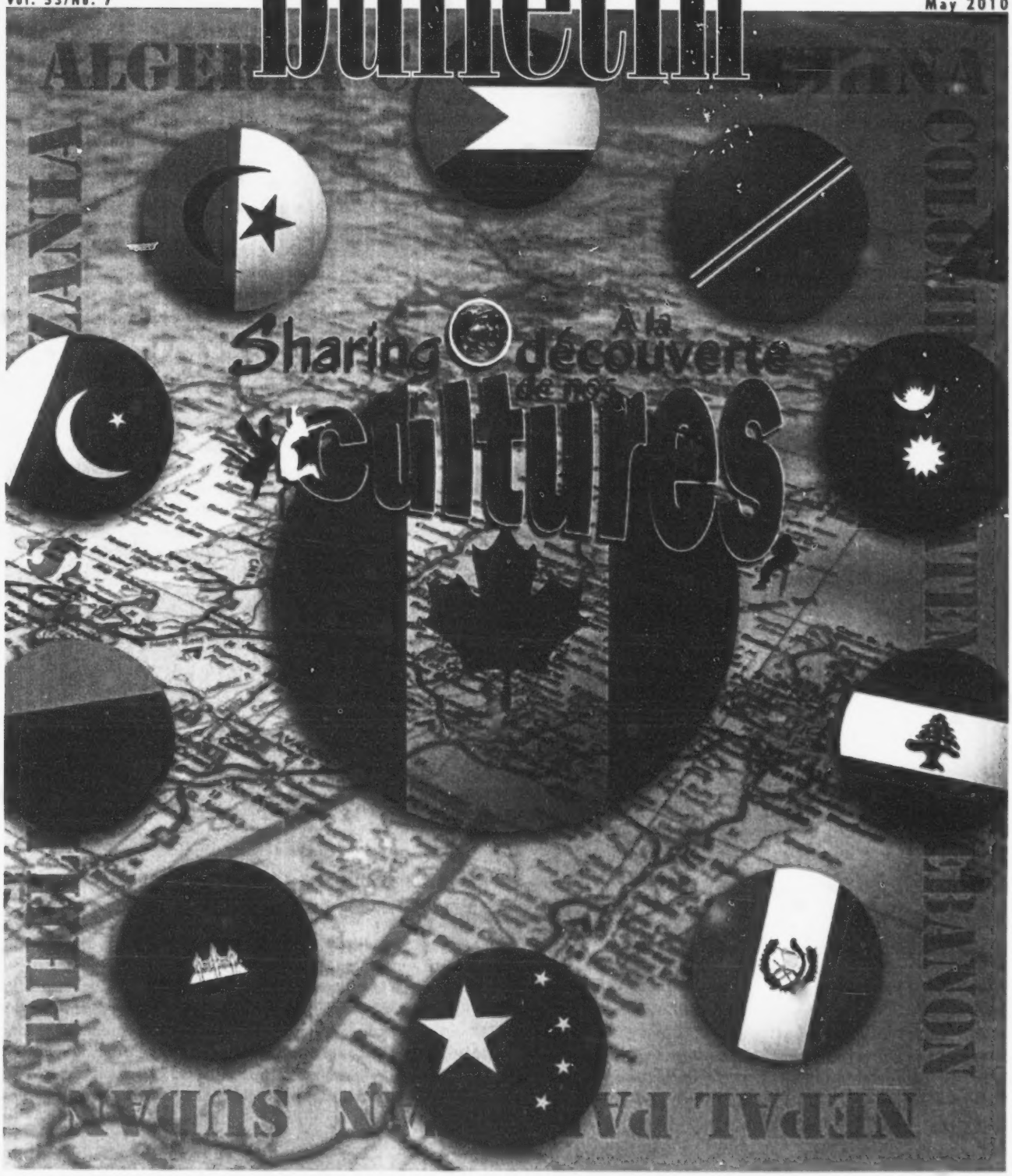

THE
bulletin

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Up Front from the President

In February I attended the 54th Session of the United Nations Committee on the Status of Women held in New York City. I was very excited and intrigued on being able to go to the United Nations to attend such a conference, especially after attending the 2010 CTF Women's Issues Symposium, *Advancing Women's Rights...Next Steps*.

I thought I had a basic understanding of the issues facing women in this country and the developing countries, but to my complete horror and dismay I found I knew nothing of how most women in developing countries live or how they struggle each and every day to make their lives better for themselves, their children and ultimately their country. Once again it was emphasized that it is only through education of all people that fundamental changes will occur in cultural traditions that are often imbedded in the misinterpretation of certain religions.

I listened to many speakers, mostly from the developing world, and my comments here will focus mainly about two of these lectures and the plight of women. The first group of women to present were from Zambia and their focus was on HIV AIDS. They explained that it is only through education of all people in their country that this disease will be held at bay, but more especially women, as there are many social and cultural norms within their culture that prevent them from obtaining the necessary testing and support to save their lives from this deadly disease. If education does not occur it will probably eliminate most of the people in that country. (I am sure if someone had been watching me my jaw dropped frequently during this presentation.) They explained that the social norms within Zambia state that if a woman is married there can be no possibility of a charge of rape against her husband. However, many of these married men have sex with other women and often bring HIV AIDS home. These women can refuse to have relations with their husbands but since rape is not recognized within a marriage these women have no recourse. If a married woman goes to have testing for AIDS her husband accuses her of being unfaithful and beats her mercilessly, even though he brought AIDS to their home. One woman retold a story of a husband who told his wife that he had been to the clinic and received medication for a bad heart. He stressed to her that it was important that he receive his medication on time each day. She dutifully ensured that he received his medication. She was getting sicker and sicker until finally one day she went to get tested for AIDS. She returned home and informed her husband that she had the same heart medication as he had. He knew that he had AIDS but did not tell his wife, therefore she did not get the medication in time to save her life. They also discussed a myth that is rampant with many men in that country which is, if you have sex with a virgin then you will be cured of AIDS. They have seen children as young as eight months old being infected with AIDS due to this myth.

Most people in Zambia are devout Catholics. The church prohibits the use of condoms or any contraceptives, therefore the things that could prevent the spread of AIDS are not used. There are many children born with AIDS and many orphaned at an early age.

There is a lack of crops to feed the nation. This is mainly due to the death of women. Culturally women have planted the crops, and with fewer women there has been a sharp decrease in crop development. I was in awe of these women. I wanted to ask how they beat these social and cultural norms and decided to become advocates for education to ensure that this dreadful disease can be abated so that their culture and country will survive.

Human trafficking was another session that opened my eyes to the magnitude of this issue in the developing world. Human trafficking is both a male and female concern; however, more females than males are sold by families into this way of life. Many myths exist about this being the person's choice to work in a brothel, but it is forced prostitution. Many of these families sell their children to people who beat and drug them into submission. These women and children are often not permitted out of these establishments. They are given a constant supply of drugs (usually methamphetamines) to keep them compliant and dependent. These women and children quickly become addicted to these drugs. Many organizations have tried to free these women and girls, however many return to the brothels due to their drug addictions. In order to free these women from this new slavery the supports for rehabilitation will be vital, not only due to the drug addictions, but these girls are often shunned from their families as a result of being in a brothel even though it was the family that sold them. It has been said that rescuing the girls is the easy part. I listened to a man who went undercover as a pimp to try and break some of the huge human trafficking rings that exist in the developing world. He has written a book called *Slave Hunter*. He purports that if there was no demand for prostitution there would be no need for supply. In Sweden they have decreased the demand because the government no longer criminalizes the prostitute but criminalizes the client. In Latin America one in four males use the brothels on a regular basis. In the United States it is one in eight. He was talking to a border patrol guard from India (who was searching for smuggled or pirated goods) about prostitution who commented that there will always be prostitution. "What is a man supposed to do between the ages of 18 and 30 when he gets married? Also, we only use Nepal girls in India brothels who come from the countryside as they can't read and are not educated." If they find these pirated goods they are confiscated but they don't worry about the trafficking of girls because they can do nothing about them. The truth is that the pirating of DVDs is more important than the trafficking of girls.

There is huge divide between what happens in the developed world and the developing world, especially when it comes to the value and treatment of women. Again, in book after book and lecture after lecture the one common thread is education. If educating girls determines the success of a country then it cannot be emphasized enough how much developing countries could improve their economic performance by educating girls. When Lawrence Summers was chief economist of the World Bank he stated, "Investment in girl's education may well be the highest-return investment available in the developing world."

It will only be through women's education that we can hope to see an improvement in life for women worldwide. If through education we can see improvements in the conditions that these woman in developing countries endure each day then it is the developed world's moral responsibility to assist in whatever manner we can. I cannot imagine, as a woman, being subjected to sex trafficking, forced prostitution, gender-based violence including honour killings and mass rape, and maternal mortality, which needlessly claims one woman a minute. These issues are huge in magnitude and scope; however, we need to learn all we can about these issues to ensure that we educate all our students of these atrocities and to play our part in being a part of the solution. Education is the key.

Lily B.

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PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

BLAKETOWN

Hairless for Haiti fundraiser at Crescent Collegiate

On February 9, eleven students and seven teachers at Crescent Collegiate in Blaketown went "Hairless for Haiti." After a 2½ week fundraising blitz, with a goal to raise $5,000 towards their effort, a general assembly of students cheered on as teachers and students alike took on a drastically different appearance. Volunteer hair stylists Jennine Gosse and Georgina Clarke brandished the Crescent clippers. Students obviously wanted to see hair fall and smashed the $5,000 goal, presenting a cheque for $10,425 to Eileen McCann, a Canadian Red Cross volunteer.

Crescent Collegiate student Barbie Gosse presents Eileen McCann of the Canadian Red Cross with a cheque for $10, 425 raised by the school's Hairless for Haiti fundraiser.

"This was an absolutely amazing effort on behalf of students, teachers, support staff, and residents of the 17 communities served by Crescent Collegiate," said Gabe Ryan, a teacher at Crescent Collegiate. "The highlight of the event occurred when three females took to the stage. Brittany Burt said good-bye to all of her hair as students cheered her on, and she looks just as cute hairless as she was before the clippers started their swift swath." Erin Bonisteel received wild applause as she shed her long locks and walked away lighter on her feet. She donated her hair to "Locks for Love," an organization that provides hair pieces for needy youth. Erin also individually raised $615 towards the cause, a phenomenal effort on her part. Then, Mrs. Michelle Chislett-Lahey, Crescent's Principal, screamed her way through a "very short" new hairdo provided by Constable Hire of the Whitbourne detachment of the RCMP. The crescendo of cheering reached a higher pitch. All 17 hairless (or almost hairless) then gathered for a group photo wearing their "Hairless for Haiti" t-shirts and toques provided by Mrs. Betty Didham. The assembly closed with two musical numbers, a beautiful rendition of Neil Young's "After the Gold Rush" by senior high students Lauren George and Miranda Power, accompanied on guitar and back-up vocals by Michael Crocker, plus a haunting a cappella version of "Life Uncommon" by Jewel from Grade 7 student Taylor Moore.

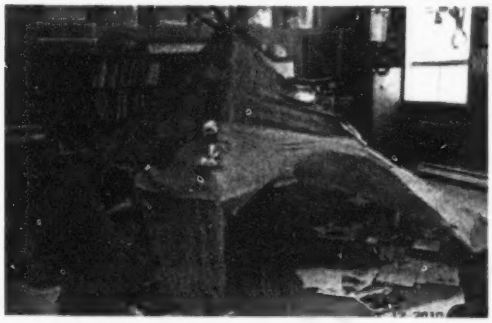
While the assembly took on a lighter side because of the nature of the event, students were reminded, and were totally tuned in to the reason for "Hairless for Haiti." With upwards of 250,000 dead, two to three million people homeless, over forty thousand amputees, an economy in ruin, and a future as daunting and uncertain as any in the world, the people of Haiti need every kind of help so generously given by all corners of our global village. "Thanks to all those affiliated with Crescent Collegiate and to the general public for caring so much about others and for making this event such a great success," concluded Mr. Ryan.

TROUT RIVER

Jakeman All Grade students learn about Aboriginal culture

Students at Jakeman All Grade in Trout River recently built a teepee which was constructed as a reading centre for a multi-age 4/5/6 class in Language Arts and Social Studies unit on Aboriginal Culture. The students also completed an individual research project whereby they had to choose an aspect of Aboriginal culture (e.g. tools, medicine, food, clothing, etc.) and compare and contrast two different Aboriginal groups (e.g. Beothuk and Innu shelter).

As a class, they constructed three displays and presented their findings orally to the class. "It was a great project," said Kelly Pevie, a teacher at Jakeman All Grade, "and the children are now able to recognize Aboriginal names and actually tell you lots of information about how they lived, whereas when I first started this project, the class could barely recall three aboriginal group names."



Teepee which was constructed as a reading centre for a multi-age 4/5/6 class in Language Arts and Social Studies unit on Aboriginal Culture.

WESTERN BAY

Royal Canadian Legion present awards to Cabot Academy students

On March 9, the Royal Canadian Legion in Carbonear held its Annual Awards Night. Four students from Cabot Academy in Western Bay received awards at the branch level for the Royal Canadian Legion's Remembrance Day Poster Contest. The winners were: Michelle Gillingham, Grade 6 – First Place (Black & White Poster, junior level); Lucas Scott, Grade 4 – Third Place (Poetry, junior level); Celine Delaney, Grade 3 – Third Place (Colored Poster, primary level); and Seanna Traverse, Grade 3 – Third Place (Black & White Poster, primary level).

Provincial Awards were also presented during this ceremony. Three of the Cabot Academy students received Provincial awards. Michelle Gillingham received First Place (junior level) for her black and white poster, Seanna Traverse won First Place (primary level) for her black and white poster, and Celine Delaney received Second Place (primary level) for her colored poster.

Lucas Scott also received a second place award at the national level for his 2009 Remembrance Day poster.

The Royal Canadian Legion Rememberance Day Poster Contest is open to all Canadian school children. Contest participants assist the Legion with one of their primary goals which is to foster the tradition of Remembrance amongst Canadians.

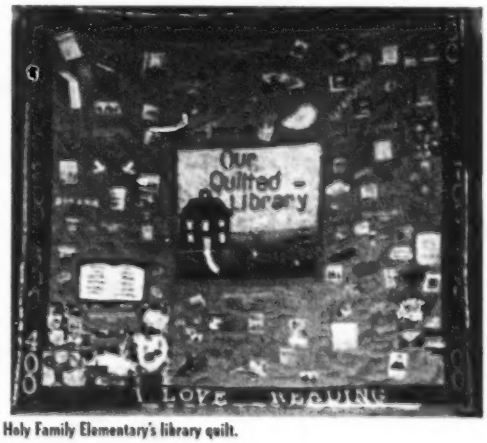
Congratulations to all from Cabot Academy and the School Community.

From left: Lucas Scott, Michelle Gillingham, Celine Delaney and Seanna Traverse proudly display their Royal Canadian Legion awards.

PARADISE

Our Quilted Library at Holy Family Elementary

Hanging on the library wall of Holy Family Elementary in Paradise is a very special quilt made by Marg Dinn, a former school student assistant. The quilt captures the Dewey Decimal Classification System visually, and artistically outlines what each category entails. "In this way, students can become independent users, accessing information to fulfill their need, at any given time," said Tina Costello, Teacher-Librarian at Holy Family Elementary. "Many quilt conversations take place during classroom book exchanges between teacher and student and student and student... A school community of students and teachers locating and making sense of information, and hopefully their contribution to it... Dewey would be proud!"



Holy Family Elementary's library quilt.

Holy Family students participate in Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Awards

Mrs. Gambin's Grade Six class at Holy Family Elementary in Paradise participated in the Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Awards over the past few months. Students read 10 books from the non-fiction category and were enthralled with such topics as peace, fire, constellations, explorers and native people. An intriguing book called *Robots: From Everyday to Out of this World* by Adrienne Mason received the most votes from the class. Winners will be announced in May.

BAY ROBERTS

Olympic commotion celebrated at Holy Redeemer School

Olympic commotion was celebrated across Canada, and on February 26 schools across the province celebrated Newfoundland and Labrador Day at the Olympics. The active living team at Holy Redeemer Elementary in Spaniard's Bay celebrated Newfoundland and Labrador culture. The Olympic circles were outlined on the gym floor using approximately 90 students from Grades 1 to 4 and colored construction paper.

Students at Holy Redeemer participate in Olympic circles during Newfoundland and Labrador Day at the Olympics.

Another 35 students were involved in presenting food and storytelling (blue circle), fishing culture (black circle), NL sports (red circle), traditional music and dance (green circle) and finally mummers and kitchen party (yellow circle). As the procession of students made their way to the gym, they were entertained by the school's traditional music group. Following the display of Newfoundland and Labrador culture, the school's cheerleaders performed a five-minute routine.

The final event of the Olympic commotion involved students from K to 6 competing in luge/skeleton races using scooters. The emphasis being on "participation", not "winning". The murals on the gym wall were painted by Ms. Dwyer and her Grade 3 class. At the end of the day there were prize draws of Olympic mascots; one student per class were drawn.

Rooting for Healthy Day at Holy Redeemer School

On March 16, the students of Holy Redeemer School in Spaniard's Bay participated in Rooting for Healthy Day. As part of this day, students who availed of the breakfast program had eggs on the menu, compliments of Newfoundland Eggs. In addition, the Milk Foundation provided each student in the school with a free milk. Holy Redeemer would like to extend a special thank you to the following people who were in attendance for the day's events: Ms. Melanie Stokes (representative of Kids Eat Smart Foundation), Ms. Tracy English (Eastern Active Schools), Mr. Jeremy Mullins and Ms. Joanne Helm (representatives of Newfoundland Eggs Inc.) and Ms. Anna Norman (Chair of Holy Redeemer School Council).

Students at Holy Redeemer take part in the Rooting for Healthy Day.

Holy Redeemer students awarded in Annual Speak Off

On March 23, the Bay Roberts Branch of the NLTA held its annual speak off at the Lion's Club in Bay Roberts. Six students from Holy Redeemer School (Spaniard's Bay), Amalgamated Academy (Bay Roberts) and St. Peter's School (Upper Island Cove) took part in the speak off.

Congratulations are extended from Holy Redeemer School to Melissa Galway, a Grade 9 student of Holy Redeemer who placed first and Rebecca Gosse, a Grade 7 student of Holy Redeemer who placed third.

(l-r): Rebecca Gosse (third place winner) and Melissa Galway (first place winner) with their awards for the Bay Roberts Branch annual Speak Off.

ST. JOHN'S

Macdonald Drive Junior High holds Matholympics 2010

On February 11, students at Macdonald Drive Junior High in St. John's participated in the opening ceremonies of the school's own version of the Olympic games called the 2010 Matholympics, in which sports and math were highlighted. The theme for the two-week period was *Inukshuk Meets Pi*.

Each homeroom represented a different country participating in the Vancouver Winter Olympics and paraded into the gym with their flags. The Olympic theme song/video *I Believe* was played and *Oh Canada* was sung. Then teachers played students in a game of hockey.

Students at Macdonald Drive Junior High participate in Matholympics 2010.

Throughout the two weeks that followed there were several draws for Olympic prizes (mitts, scarves, toques, t-shirts) and a trivia questionnaire. Then on February 26, on the final 'Matholympic' day, students solved Winter Olympic math questions and participated in indoor variations of the luge and biathlon events. Points were tallied for each homeroom and during closing ceremonies gold, silver and bronze medals were presented to the top three classes. "Students certainly had the Olympic spirit as they proudly and enthusiastically sang the national anthem at the end," said Marilyn Cooke, Mathematics Teacher at Macdonald Drive Junior High. "Congratulations to all the Mathletes!"

ST. LAWRENCE

Math Day celebrations at St. Lawrence Academy

On March 31, St. Lawrence Academy held its second annual Math Day at SLA. In the morning students from grades K-12 met in the gym for opening ceremonies, then travelled in teams to classrooms to create a flag with a math theme to represent their team. These flags were presented for all to see in the afternoon session in the gym. A free recess snack was provided for all students, and then they travelled in teams from class to class to participate in various mathematics challenges. The sessions included Yahtzee, math bingo, problem solving, Wii Fit math and many others.

Students at St. Lawrence Academy participate in one of many math challenges.

In the afternoon the entire school gathered in the gym to present their flags and participate in a game of "Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader?" math edition. There were also prize draws and a presentation of medals. St. Lawrence Academy's junior high math league team, which won the regional math league competition, was also presented with a plaque at the ceremony.

This day was made possible through a grant received from the Eastern School District's promotion of Excellence in Mathematics. The students had a fun-filled educational day and hope to repeat it again next year.

LABRADOR CITY/WABUSH

Magical Math moments in March

As part of the Provincial Excellence in Mathematics Strategy, A.P. Low Primary School in Labrador City and J.R. Smallwood Middle School in Wabush have been engaged in several opportunities to support making math more meaningful and most of all, 'enjoyable'.

On March 3 (World Math Day), many classrooms joined in a celebration of numbers as children from across the globe united in their quest to set a world record in answering mental arithmetic questions. World Math Day is designed for all ages and ability levels where students compete and play live on the Internet with other students around the globe. This is the third year both schools received information and many teachers registered their class in order to participate in this challenge. In 2009, more than two million students from 204 countries combined to correctly answer 452,681,681 questions. This year 1,133,246 students in 56,082 schools from 235 countries united to set a new world record by correctly answering 499,732,613 questions!

During the week of March 8-12, J.R. Smallwood Middle School celebrated the 'Power of Pi'. March 14, or 3-14, is a day to celebrate the marvelous mysteries of this number. To help create ambiance, homerooms decorated their doors and the winning doors were rewarded with a Pizza Pi Party. Students participated in a Pi Memorization competition and the grade level students that were able to recite the most digits of Pi were given the opportunity to throw cream pies in their principal's or vice principal's face. The most digits recited were 149! Midday Munches were gracious enough to supply the cream pies as well as bake individual apple "Pi s" for all the winners.

Harry LaCosta (left), principal, and Darryn Cramm, Vice-Principal, of J.R. Smallwood Middle School, get "Pi"'d during the "Power of Pi" celebrations.

During gym classes each grade level took part in a Pi Walk, therefore in essence, J.R. Smallwood can now say they have walked Pi (3.14 km). Another activity involved making Pi Chains by using 10 different colors, one color represents a number and then they created a chain to go around their classroom (circumference). One class set to work and created a chain that contained 1500 digits of Pi.

An Internet Pi Scavenger Hunt enlightened students with some factual information pertaining to this magical number. A cross-curricular opportunity was also provided which included a literacy link using the children's books about Sir Cumference and his many adventures. The play on mathematical language lent itself to enriching vocabulary development and mathematical concepts.

On the evenings of March 17, 29 and 30, families were invited to attend 'Family Math Night'. This was an opportunity for families to participate in hands-on activities and leave with practical strategies and resources to strengthen the home-school partnership in the area of mathematics. The activities selected were just a few examples of the exciting things going on in their child's classrooms. "Parents and other family members may not realize how they do have an influence on their child's math skills," said Sara LaCosta, Numeracy Support Teacher at J.R. Smallwood Middle School. "Whenever you sort objects, read schedules, compare prices, make change, use a calculator or calendar, measure and weigh they are indeed a model of mathematical behaviour."

Each Family Math Night entertained approximately 250 participants. Families graphed the number of bubbles they could blow, estimated how long for a kiss, solved jelly bean math problems, helped Geo go home, challenged the Queen of Hearts to mindreading, measured the distance the Big Bad Wolf blew items across the floor and engaged in many amusing activities that would endorse positive attitudes in math.

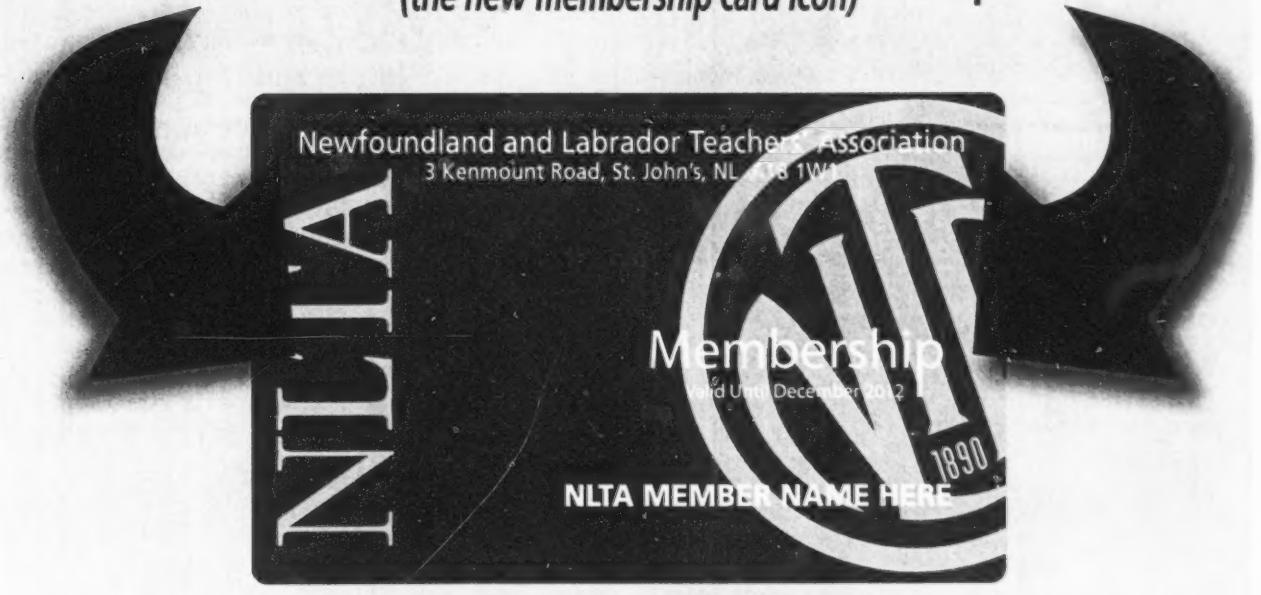
Volunteers to support these evenings came from staff members, substitute teachers, student interns, retired teachers, community members, program staff personnel, and high school students hoping to acquire more volunteer hours. "As they say…," commented Ms. LaCosta, "it takes a community to raise a child and community support is alive and well in Western Labrador!"

"Having the opportunity to observe families giggle and get lost in the magical moments was truly the best reward any planning committee could be given. The supportive comments and enthusiasm shared by all involved certainly provides the positive energy to persevere in the organization of similar family events for the future."

NLTA Membership Cards Expire June 2010

In order to receive your new NLTA membership card go to www.nlta.nl.ca and click

(the new membership card icon)



For further information contact:

Lesley-Ann Browne, NLTA Communications Officer
726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 ext. 228
labrowne@nlta.nl.ca

Pre-Retirement Seminars 2010

Teachers within two years of retirement eligibility should register for one of the NLTA's seven Pre-Retirement Seminars scheduled to be held in the fall of 2010 in Stephenville, Corner Brook, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, and three in St. John's. (Please note: consideration will be given to combining seminars if registration numbers are sufficiently low in a particular seminar.) These seminars are held in accordance with Association policy as part of its overall program of pre-retirement counselling. Clause 18.12 of the Provincial Collective Agreement and Clause 29.12 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement provide two days paid leave to attend these seminars.

Information sessions will deal with topics such as the Teachers' Pension Plan, Severance Pay, Employment Insurance, NLTA Group Insurance, Financial and Estate Planning and the Canada Pension Plan. As well, time is available for individual counselling of prospective reurees by the various consultants.

Things You Should Know About Attending

- Potential participants must register with the NLTA for a particular seminar and apply to their Board office for leave.
- Only those teachers eligible to retire during or before June 2013 will be eligible to attend.
- Registration must be received at the NLTA Office at least four weeks in advance to ensure approval of attendance.
- The Association reserves the right to refuse acceptance of registration at any particular seminar if the registration forms have not been received at the NLTA office in accordance with Association policy.
- It is the responsibility of the individual participant to make arrangements and pay for hotel accommodations, should any be required. Please reference that you are attending an NLTA function and the hotel should provide a reduced rate which is available to the NLTA.
- Travel expenses shall be reimbursed in accordance with the following provisions:
  i) participants shall be reimbursed the lesser of travel by private vehicle or public transportation to the seminar closest to the place of residence. In the event that a teacher requests and is accepted to attend a seminar other than the closest seminar, the participant shall only be reimbursed the amount applicable for travel to the closest seminar.
  ii) payment for private vehicle shall be at the rate which is 15% of the average cost of self-serve regular gasoline as determined on the first day of each fiscal quarter for the return trip from residence to seminar site.
  iii) travel via public conveyance shall be reimbursed at the rate of 80 percent of ferry, taxi, or economy airfare; in the case of airfare, the lesser of excursion (seat sale) or 80 percent of economy airfare will be paid, where excursion (seat sale) fares can be arranged. Receipts shall be required for all reimbursement.
  iv) no expenses will be paid to participants living or teaching in the community where the seminar is held.
  v) a spouse is welcome to accompany the participating teacher to the pre-retirement seminar, but no expenses will be covered.
- All other expenses, such as meals, accommodation and child care, are the responsibility of the participating teacher.
- Expenses will be provided for one pre-retirement seminar only and a teacher participant shall be permitted to attend one seminar only. (Notwithstanding this, a teacher may attend a second seminar as a spouse.)
- Teachers must attend the seminar location closest to their place of residence, except in cases where the mode, cost or availability of transportation necessitates otherwise.
- Directors and Assistant Directors, and spouses, are welcome to attend one pre-retirement seminar, but no expenses will be paid in accordance with this policy.

Given the large number of teachers eligible to retire, we reserve the right to limit the number of people who will be granted access, depending on the physical facilities available at each site. Consequently, it is imperative that teachers plan ahead and register early in the event that registrations have to be taken on a first-come, first-served basis.

NOTE: The full text of the NLTA Policy on Pre-Retirement Seminars and the registration form can also be found on the NLTA website (www.nlta.nl.ca). Click on "Recent Info" on the main page or "Online Forms" on the members only website. The NLTA policy will also be mailed to teachers with confirmation of registration.

2010 Pre-Retirement Seminar

REGISTRATION FORM

Name

Home Address

Postal Code

Home Telephone

Social Insurance Number

School Name

School Telephone

Email

Please check which session you will be attending:

- ☐ **Oct. 14-15** – Hotel Gander, Gander
- ☐ **Oct. 21-22** – Holiday Inn, Stephenville
- ☐ **Oct. 28-29** – Mt. Peyton, Grand Falls-Windsor
- ☐ **Nov. 4-5** – Greenwood Inn & Suites, Corner Brook
- ☐ **Nov. 18-19** – Holiday Inn, St. John's
- ☐ **Dec. 2-3** – Holiday Inn, St. John's
- ☐ **Dec. 9-10** – Holiday Inn, St. John's

Will your spouse be attending? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of spouse (if attending)

Earliest eligibility date for pension

Have you attended a previous pre-retirement seminar?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Note:

- Teachers within two years of retirement (on or before June 2013) are eligible to attend.
- All participants must pre-register.
- You will receive confirmation prior to seminar.
- Travel costs will be paid according to policy and only to the nearest seminar.
- Teachers are advised to bring a calculator.

Please submit registration form to:

Melanie Jaster
Benefits and Economic Services Division
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
Fax: 709-726-4302; 1-877-711-6582 *(toll free)*

NOTE: As space is limited, registrations will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis.

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Date Received	Confirmation Sent	Information Package Sent

Pre-Retirement Seminars 2010

Teachers within two years of retirement eligibility should register for one of the NLTA's seven Pre-Retirement Seminars scheduled to be held in the fall of 2010 in Stephenville, Corner Brook, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, and three in St. John's. (Please note: consideration will be given to combining seminars if registration numbers are sufficiently low in a particular seminar.) These seminars are held in accordance with Association policy as part of its overall program of pre-retirement counselling. Clause 18.12 of the Provincial Collective Agreement and Clause 29.12 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement provide two days paid leave to attend these seminars.

Information sessions will deal with topics such as the Teachers' Pension Plan, Severance Pay, Employment Insurance, NLTA Group Insurance, Financial and Estate Planning and the Canada Pension Plan. As well, time is available for individual counselling of prospective retirees by the various consultants.

Things You Should Know About Attending

- Potential participants must register with the NLTA for a particular seminar and apply to their Board office for leave.
- Only those teachers eligible to retire during or before June 2013 will be eligible to attend.
- Registration must be received at the NLTA Office at least four weeks in advance to ensure approval of attendance.
- The Association reserves the right to refuse acceptance of registration at any particular seminar if the registration forms have not been received at the NLTA office in accordance with Association policy.
- It is the responsibility of the individual participant to make arrangements and pay for hotel accommodations, should any be required. Please reference that you are attending an NLTA function and the hotel should provide a reduced rate which is available to the NLTA.
- Travel expenses shall be reimbursed in accordance with the following provisions:
  i) participants shall be reimbursed the lesser of travel by private vehicle or public transportation to the seminar closest to the place of residence. In the event that a teacher requests and is accepted to attend a seminar other than the closest seminar, the participant shall only be reimbursed the amount applicable for travel to the closest seminar.
  ii) payment for private vehicle shall be at the rate which is 15% of the average cost of self-serve regular gasoline as determined on the first day of each fiscal quarter for the return trip from residence to seminar site.
  iii) travel via public conveyance shall be reimbursed at the rate of 80 percent of ferry, taxi, or economy airfare; in the case of airfare, the lesser of excursion (seat sale) or 80 percent of economy airfare will be paid, where excursion (seat sale) fares can be arranged. Receipts shall be required for all reimbursement.
  iv) no expenses will be paid to participants living or teaching in the community where the seminar is held.
  v) a spouse is welcome to accompany the participating teacher to the pre-retirement seminar, but no expenses will be covered.
- All other expenses, such as meals, accommodation and child care, are the responsibility of the participating teacher.
- Expenses will be provided for one pre-retirement seminar only and a teacher participant shall be permitted to attend one seminar only. (Notwithstanding this, a teacher may attend a second seminar as a spouse.)
- Teachers must attend the seminar location closest to their place of residence, except in cases where the mode, cost or availability of transportation necessitates otherwise.
- Directors and Assistant Directors, and spouses, are welcome to attend one pre-retirement seminar, but no expenses will be paid in accordance with this policy.

Given the large number of teachers eligible to retire, we reserve the right to limit the number of people who will be granted access, depending on the physical facilities available at each site. Consequently, it is imperative that teachers plan ahead and register early in the event that registrations have to be taken on a first-come, first-served basis.

NOTE: The full text of the NLTA Policy on Pre-Retirement Seminars and the registration form can also be found on the NLTA website (www.nlta.nl.ca). Click on "Recent Info" on the main page or "Online Forms" on the members only website. The NLTA policy will also be mailed to teachers with confirmation of registration.

2010 Pre-Retirement Seminar

REGISTRATION FORM

Name

Home Address

Postal Code

Home Telephone

Social Insurance Number

School Name

School Telephone

Email

Please check which session you will be attending:

- ☐ **Oct. 14-15** – Hotel Gander, Gander
- ☐ **Oct. 21-22** – Holiday Inn, Stephenville
- ☐ **Oct. 28-29** – Mt. Peyton, Grand Falls-Windsor
- ☐ **Nov. 4-5** – Greenwood Inn & Suites, Corner Brook
- ☐ **Nov. 18-19** – Holiday Inn, St. John's
- ☐ **Dec. 2-3** – Holiday Inn, St. John's
- ☐ **Dec. 9-10** – Holiday Inn, St. John's

Will your spouse be attending? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of spouse (if attending)

Earliest eligibility date for pension

Have you attended a previous pre-retirement seminar?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Note:

- Teachers within two years of retirement (on or before June 2013) are eligible to attend.
- All participants must pre-register.
- You will receive confirmation prior to seminar.
- Travel costs will be paid according to policy and only to the nearest seminar.
- Teachers are advised to bring a calculator.

Please submit registration form to:

Melanie Jaster
Benefits and Economic Services Division
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
Fax: 709-726-4302; 1-877-711-6582 *(toll free)*

NOTE: As space is limited, registrations will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis.

FOR NLTA OFFICE USE ONLY		
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Class Size Matters

by EDWARD HANCOCK

"Concerns re class size and the need to maintain manageable class sizes have been echoed throughout the country and are recognized by all teacher associations as a key component of improving the delivery of educational programs to students."

Few can argue the educational advantages of manageable class sizes, particularly at the early elementary level. Today's diverse classrooms are much different from those we remember from our own childhood. Students with English as a second language (ESL), multiple intelligences, differently abled students, behavioural and social issues, individual program planning and individual modified programs present challenges that stretch the abilities of the adult in the room and limit the individual attention they can provide students.

These words probably sound familiar and, if asked for the source, some of you might hazard a guess that they came from the NLTA's brief to the Teacher Allocation Commission a few years ago or one of its recent pre-Budget briefs to government. Actually, the quote comes from the recent budget brief of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union to that province's government as it prepared for its 2010 budget. Concerns re class size and the need to maintain manageable class sizes have been echoed throughout the country and are recognized by all teacher associations as a key component of improving the delivery of educational programs to students. While smaller class sizes may seem like an intuitively good idea, it is useful when research provides us with solid arguments to support the case for smaller class sizes.

The recent primary class size reduction strategy in Ontario provides such evidence. This initiative (PCS) was rolled out over a four-year period from 2004 through 2008 and, in 2008-09, over 90% of all primary classes in that province had 20 or fewer students and *all* primary classes had 23 or fewer students. In 2007 and 2008, the Canadian Education Association (CEA), through a contribution agreement with the Ontario Ministry of Education, conducted a study of the PCS to provide a portrait of the teaching and learning environment created in smaller classes and to determine the impacts of the initiative, both intended and unintended. The report of this study, entitled *Reducing Class Size: What Do We Know?* and authored by Dr. Nina Bascia of OISE at the University of Toronto, was recently released.

Prior to examining the results of the study of the PCS initiative, the report summarizes what it characterizes as "relatively robust findings" of previous research on class size, stating in part:

The research confirms that class size reduction does provide the environment in which teachers can teach differently. In smaller classes, they interact with individual students more frequently and use a greater variety of instructional strategies. They can create more opportunities for higher-order co-construction of meaning by students. They also may spend out-of-classroom work time on more creative planning (and less on routine marking), and they may interact more frequently with other teachers and adults in support of classroom teaching.

The research on student outcomes and behaviour tends to support teachers' beliefs that they can teach more competently and effectively in smaller classes. In smaller classes, students learn more academically and socially; they are more engaged and less disruptive…

But the research also suggests that the full gains of class size reduction cannot be achieved if it is implemented without paying attention to other factors that support innovative practice. Some of the most important factors include the ways in which teachers and students work together; the curriculum in use; and teachers' opportunities to learn new teaching strategies.

The report notes that, while research confirms some of the anticipated results of class size reductions, "there is no robust understanding of exactly how class size reduction works to improve student learning". The Ontario PCS study was designed to fill in some of these knowledge gaps and the report suggests that reduction in class sizes provides an opportunity for:

1. Improved teacher-student interaction; and
2. The implementation of innovative pedagogical and professional practices.

The following are some of the key findings:

Teacher-Student Interaction

- Quality of teachers' relationships with students improved as a result of smaller class size.
- Students were more engaged in learning than before the class size reduction.
- There was more time for teachers to help individual students experiencing learning difficulties.
- Smaller class size allowed teachers to carry out intensive, focused teacher-guided activities effectively.
- During group learning, smaller groupings enabled teachers to be more aware of, and to encourage, each student's individual participation.
- Teachers were better able to monitor children's activities during work time.
- More classroom space allowed for a location where the teacher could interact with one or a few students while the others worked independently.
- Improved student classroom behaviour.
- Improved peer relationships within the classroom.

Pedagogical and Professional Practices

- Teaching and learning can become more child-centered, child-directed, communicative and exploratory.
- Increase in small-group work and differentiated instruction.
- More opportunities for children to individually develop vocabulary and pragmatic skills.
- Less time spent on routine tasks like marking students' work.
- More time for the teacher to pay attention to and reflect upon appropriate learning strategies.
- Increase in the level of individualized instruction for students with special educational needs in regular classes.
- Positive response from parents, many of whom reported fewer learning difficulties and behavioural challenges on the part of their children, with more positive social interactions and greater engagement in learning.

This study notes that there are also other factors which will affect the success of class size reduction initiatives. While space does not allow an examination of all those factors here, the full report is available on the CEA website at www.cea-ace.ca.

In its conclusion, the report notes: *Like similar initiatives undertaken in other provinces and elsewhere, Ontario's PCS strategy confirms that class size reduction can provide the environment in which teachers can interact with individual students more frequently and use a greater variety of instructional strategies, create more opportunities for higher-order co-construction of meaning by students, and interact more frequently with other teachers and adults in support of classroom teaching. The evidence suggests that students learn more, are more engaged, and are less disruptive. Parents of children in smaller classes perceive improvements in their children's school experiences.*

This research provides further support for the positive outcomes resulting from class size reductions. It is for these and similar reasons that the NLTA has supported the work of the Teacher Allocation Commission and government's initiative in instituting class size caps from Kindergarten through Grade 9 as of 2010-11. However, it must be noted that the Teacher Allocation Commission recommended smaller class sizes for K-6 than those that have been instituted. A further effort must be made to reduce class sizes to those recommended by the Commission.

Class size reduction strategies can have a major impact on teaching and learning, but only where previous class sizes have been in excess of the newly established caps. Such was the case for grades K-9 in many of our province's larger schools before the implementation of the new teacher allocation model. However, a commentary on class size and the positive effects of class size reduction would not be complete without reference to the fact that such an initiative has negligible impact on many of the schools in this province for the simple reason that a large number of our schools are very small in size. The *2008-09 Education Statistics*, published by the Department of Education, shows that nearly 50% of the province's schools have fewer than 200 students, with 23% of the schools having fewer than 100 students and 14% (39 schools) having fewer than 50 students. Many of these schools are K-12 schools. In these smaller schools, it is not class size per se that creates the need for additional teacher allocations but the myriad of other issues that impact students' learning conditions and teachers' working conditions. The NLTA continues to highlight the needs of these schools which are not met by any strategy for reducing class sizes.

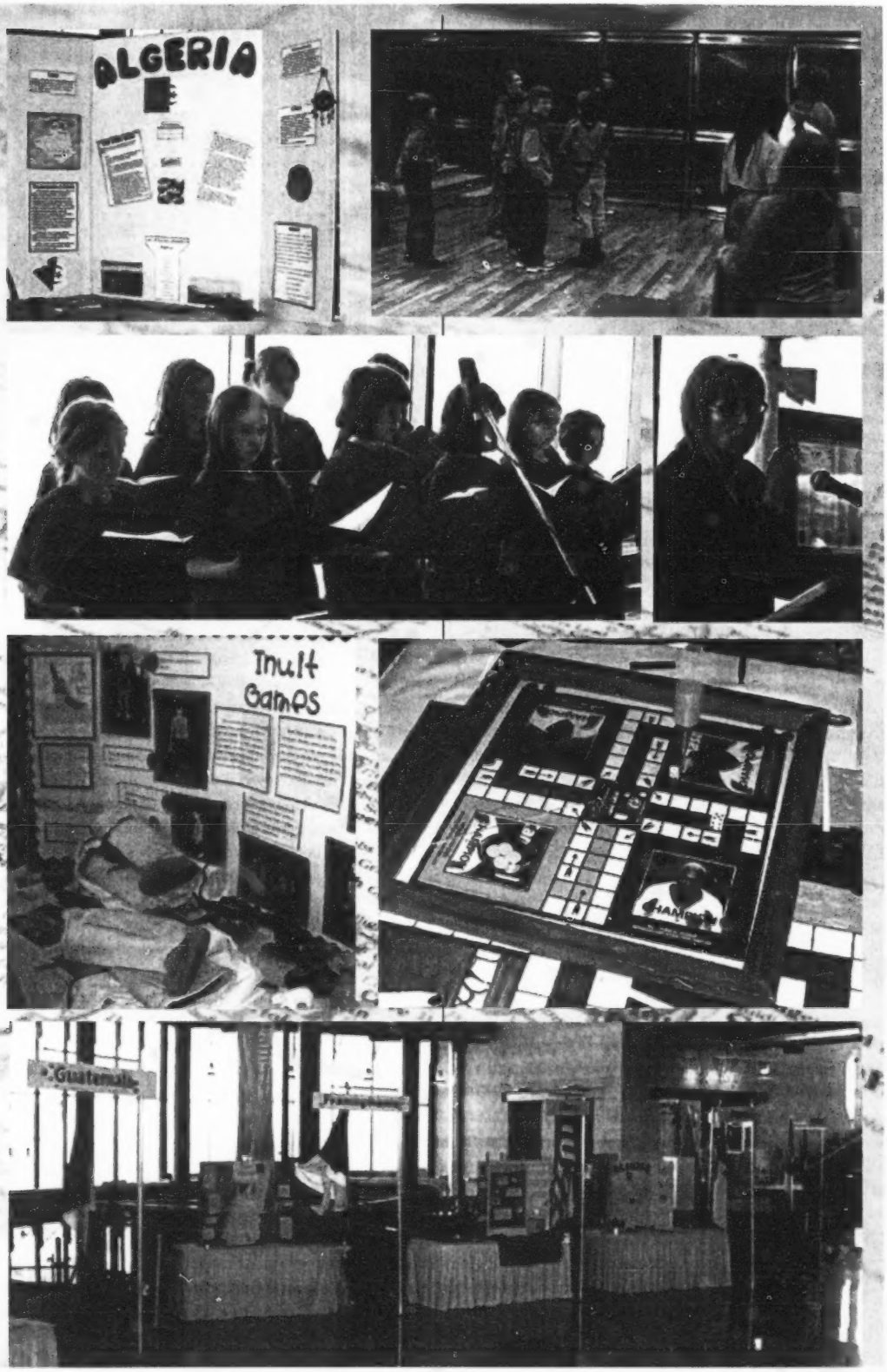
Edward Hancock is Executive Director of the NLTA.

Sharing Our Cultures
À la découverte de nos cultures

The eleventh annual Sharing Our Cultures • À la découverte de nos cultures educational and multicultural event was officially opened on March 21st at The Rooms in St. John's. Representatives from the provincial and federal government, students, teachers, invited guests and members of the general public were thoroughly entertained with speeches, singing, stories, presentations and the parade of cultures.

The theme this year was "games" and for the two days following, hundreds of students and their teachers visited The Rooms to see displays of games played around the world. Students had the opportunity to have a hands-on experience with the games and could integrate bilingual and interactive activities into their learning about diverse cultures. Students from Prince of Wales Collegiate acted as tour guides to groups of visiting students so they could visit the various cultural displays.

There were numerous countries and cultures represented which included: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, China, Columbia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Francophonie of Newfoundland, Guatemala, Inuit, Karen, Kosovo, Serbia, Lebanon, Liberia, Mi'kmaq, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Sudan, Taiwan and Tanzania.


ALGERIA
Inuit
Games
Guatemala

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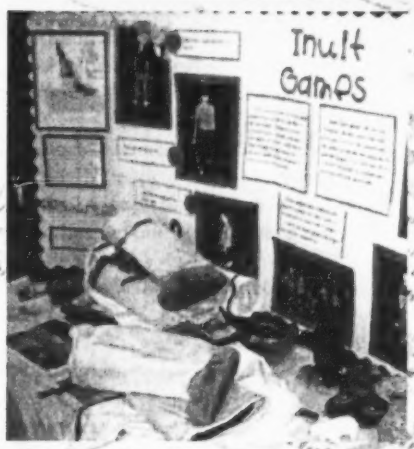
ALGERIA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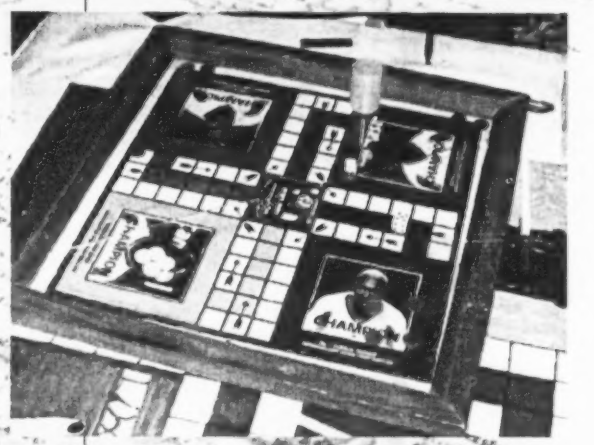

Guatemala
Francophonie

Filling Vacant Teaching Positions

An Overview of the Collective Agreement Process

by STEFANIE TUFF

As spring arrives and moves on to summer, questions often arise surrounding the obligations of school boards when it comes to filling advertised vacant positions. Do transfer requests have priority over other applications? Does preference in hiring have to be given to replacement and substitute teachers over applicants who have no prior experience with the school board? How does the reassignment of teachers who have been declared redundant factor into the process? These types of issues are addressed in Articles 6 and 9 of the Provincial Collective Agreement.

Article 9 (Article 47 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement) sets out the manner in which school boards must deal with redundant teaching positions. If, based on seniority and an appropriate assessment of capability, a permanent teacher cannot be kept at his/her school, the teacher "shall have priority, based upon seniority, subject to capability to perform the job function required, to vacant teaching positions and teaching positions held by junior teachers, in the following order of priority: (i) within the community; (ii) within the nearest community, within the school district, where such a position exists." The process of determining redundancies and offering reassignments for the coming school year takes place by May 7 of the current school year. Teachers who decline reassignment will not be considered for other reassignments until after the last day of June.

Vacant positions that are advertised between early May and the end of June, and from July 1 onward – after any reassignments and recalls of laid off teachers have been addressed – are filled in accordance with Article 6 of the Provincial Collective Agreement, in particular:

6.03 The basic criteria for the selection of teachers shall be **competence, suitability and qualifications as assessed by the School Board**.

6.11 In filling vacant positions **in accordance with Clause 6.03**, the Board shall:

- **make a reasonable effort to accommodate requests from teachers already employed with the board in a continuing contract.**
- subject to Clause 6.12(a), **give consideration to applications from teachers who have served in replacement and/or substitute positions with the Board before applications from teachers with no previous experience with the Board.**

(Emphasis added. For the Labrador West Collective Agreement, see Clauses 42.05 and 42.07.)

What this means is that school boards have the right to establish, in good faith, the required currently modern standards in qualifications, competence and suitability for teaching positions and to evaluate and assess applicants on the basis of those standards. After making a reasonable effort to accommodate requests, such as transfers, from teachers employed in continuing contracts, school boards are then obligated to consider their term contract and substitute teachers *before* moving on to consider applications from teachers who are new to the board. This language in the Collective Agreement creates three distinct pools of applicants for vacant positions: 1) teachers who have continuing (permanent) contracts; 2) teachers who have worked in term contracts or as substitutes; and, 3) teachers who have never been employed by the board before. While this contract language does establish some priorities and a sequence for considering applications, it is important to note that school boards are not contractually required to hire on the basis of seniority when filling vacancies (as opposed to the redundancy/reassignment process in which seniority must be followed).

In a past arbitration decision, the Arbitrator determined that the following process would constitute full compliance with the requirements of Clause 6.11(b): *1) for the individual [hiring] Panel members*

to develop a short list exclusively from the applications of replacement and substitute teachers, 2) for the whole Panel to review and assess only replacement and substitute teacher applications, 3) for the Panel to conduct any interviews determined necessary only among that group of replacement or substitute teachers and, 4) for the Panel to determine how many acceptable applicants there are among that group. ... Only upon completion of that exercise undertaken exclusively for replacement and/or substitute teachers with the Board would the Panel be entitled to undertake a similar exercise for outside applicants. Ultimately the only point at which both sets of applications would be considered together would be in the Board's final determination of the best candidate for the position.

This interpretation of Clause 6.11(b) does not require school boards to give preference in hiring to replacement and/or substitute teachers. But, applicants from this group must be given full and fair consideration for vacant teaching positions *before* any information about applicants who are new to the board can enter into the deliberations. A school board's process for choosing the best candidate for any given teaching position must meet this requirement and be based upon a good faith assessment of competence, suitability and qualifications.

In a more recent arbitration decision, the grievor was a replacement/substitute teacher who was interviewed for a term contract position. In terms of qualifications, the grievor did meet the currently modern standards for the job, but the school board hired a teacher who had never worked for the board. The successful applicant was interviewed before the grievor and the arbitrator ruled that this constituted an "unequivocal violation" of Article 6.11(b). However, while the arbitrator did determine that the interview process was tainted, performance concerns were raised by two of the grievor's prior administrators, both of whom were contacted for references. The arbitrator ultimately decided that these concerns were significant and that, despite the flaws in the hiring process, the board did have a reasonable basis for deciding to hire the other candidate.

This decision does reinforce the prior ruling that applicants from the replacement/substitute teacher group must be given full and fair consideration for vacant positions *before* any information about applicants who are new to the board can enter into the deliberations. A school board's process for choosing the best candidate for any given teaching position must meet this requirement and be based upon a good faith assessment of competence, suitability and qualifications. However, the judgment of which applicant best meets the criteria is "as assessed by the School Board" pursuant to Clause 6.03. Therefore, legitimate training and performance concerns can be determinative in a hiring decision.

Teachers who have questions about the hiring process or feel that their rights under the Collective Agreement have been violated in this or any other respect should contact an Administrative Officer of the NLTA Benefits and Economic Services Division for assistance and advice.

Stefanie Tuff is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Options When Sick Leave Has Been Exhausted

by PERRY DOWNEY

I am certain that the question, "What are my options as a teacher when my sick leave runs out?" is a common question that has been asked in practically every staff room throughout this province over the years. However, the question often only arises when another colleague finds him/herself in such a predicament due to an illness or accident that has prevented him/her from returning to work. Unfortunately, when one has very few sick days remaining, it is often too late to realize that steps could have and should have been taken much earlier to prevent any delays in receiving benefits that may be applicable. Don't wait until you are about to run out of your paid sick leave before you begin to answer this question. Know your options long before it happens.

Article 15 of the Provincial Collective Agreement provides a formula for the amount of paid sick leave that is available to teachers. In the event that a teacher's illness or disability continues beyond the available paid sick leave period, there are other potential income sources that can and should be explored.

1. Long-Term Disability Insurance – "An Insurance on Your Income".

Over the years, as teachers review their bi-weekly pay stubs, many have often asked the question, "What is the purpose of having Long-Term Disability Insurance?" Long-Term Disability (LTD) Insurance (Option C, under the Group Insurance Program) is: "*Intended to protect the income of an insured member in the event that a medical disability prevents an insured member from performing the duties of their occupation beyond the expiry of paid sick leave.*" (NLTA Group Insurance Program Booklet, Page 62)

LTD does not automatically "kick in" after an individual has exhausted his/her sick leave that has accumulated, as per Article 15 – Sick Leave of the Provincial Collective Agreement (Article 27 Labrador West Collective Agreement). However, to avail of LTD benefits, an individual teacher must apply and provide detailed medical documentation to the insurance underwriter that has to be considered during the adjudication process of the application. The medical evidence must confirm that the individual is totally disabled from performing his/her teaching duties and that the disability will continue beyond the period of paid sick leave.

A teacher should apply for LTD benefits three to four months prior to sick leave expiring, or as early as possible upon becoming ill or disabled. Applications have to be obtained from Johnson Inc., our Group Insurance administrator, and submitted to Manulife Financial for medical adjudication. If a medically verifiable illness is confirmed showing a wholly and continuous medical inability to teach, the application will be approved and a tax-free benefit of 85% of net salary will be paid. This benefit can be paid for up to two years when disabled from teaching and up to age 60 thereafter if medically disabled from an occupation. However, if a teacher's illness/disability is "likely to be permanent" or is "severe and prolonged", the teacher will be required to apply for Teacher Pension Plan Disability Benefits and/or Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefits and any amount payable from these sources will offset or reduce, dollar-for-dollar, the amount paid by LTD. The idea is to provide a "reasonable" level of income from all sources.

For example, if 85% of a teacher's net income is $3,600/month and the teacher is approved for LTD benefits, the amount paid by Manulife is $3,600. But, if the teacher is approved for CPP Disability at $900/month, Manulife will pay $2,700/month. If the teacher is in receipt of CPP Disability at $900/month and TPP at $2,000/month, Manulife pays $700 to top-up to $3,600/month. If the income from TPP and CPP disability benefits exceed the $3,600 (85% of the teacher's net income) then no benefit is payable from LTD.

2. Employment Insurance (EI)

A teacher can access 15 weeks of EI Sickness Benefits (currently $457 per week) while school is in session by applying for EI and providing a sick leave note from the doctor and a Record of Employment (ROE)

from the school board indicating the last paid sick day. When applying for Employment Insurance, the teacher should request that two weeks of paid sick leave be used as the EI waiting period, thereby eliminating a two-week gap in income. (Important to note: The Long-Term Disability program for teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador has been deemed a private plan, and therefore, teachers are entitled and eligible to receive both the EI and LTD benefits concurrently.)

3. Teacher Pension Plan (TPP) Disability
In the event a teacher's illness/disability prevents the teacher from efficiently performing the duties of their occupation, and the illness/disability is "likely to be permanent", a teacher can obtain their Pension "early" by applying for their Teacher Pension Plan Benefits Disability Pension through the Department of Finance. As with the LTD benefit, a medical adjudication will be performed by a doctor contracted by the Department of Finance. If approved, the pension can be payable immediately following the last paid sick leave day. For example, a 40-year-old teacher with 15 years of pensionable service and a 30% pension accrual who is permanently disabled from teaching would receive 30% of the average of their best five-year salary which begins following their last paid sick leave day and payable until death. (Note that current legislation refers to "disabled from teaching" only.)

4. Canada Pension Plan (CPP) Disability
If a teacher's illness is "severe and prolonged", i.e., a teacher is disabled from any occupation for an indefinite duration, the teacher should apply for CPP Disability Benefits, and if approved, may receive CPP Disability in addition to their paid sick leave, if paid sick leave has not yet expired. This benefit continues as long as the teacher is disabled from any occupation. Under certain circumstances, the benefit may continue for a period of time after the teacher returns to work.

In summary, the benefits available to teachers are designed to protect their income in the event that their sick leave has been exhausted. The Long-Term Disability Insurance plan is an important part of minimizing risk against a loss of regular income. It is important that teachers apply for this benefit early in their illness and well in advance of sick leave expiring. EAP services are also available to assist with issues that may arise as a result of a prolonged illness.

Recently the NLTA forwarded information packages, i.e., Teacher Health Awareness Packages (THAP), to all teachers that, according to Teacher Payroll data, have less than 80 days of sick leave remaining. These packages contain information regarding the various benefits available to individuals as they near the expiry of their sick leave benefits. It is very important for individuals to take the appropriate action in order to prevent any delays in receiving applicable benefits. All teachers are encouraged to contact an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division at the NLTA in the event of a prolonged illness and for assistance in actioning any of the above options.

Perry Downey is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

School Representative Seminars

Coming in Fall 2010

A series of School Representative Seminars will take place as a continuation of the ongoing triennial program in October 2010. Nine groupings of branches have been arranged and three seminars are offered each fall on a rotating basis. Schools will have the opportunity for representatives to attend every three years. School Representatives will receive specific information directly from the NLTA office.

Group 1 – Gander
October 15-16, 2010 – Albatross Hotel, Gander
Branches Attending: Fogo Island, Ganova, Hamilton Sound, Notre Dame, Trinity-Deadman's Bay

Group 2 – Goose Bay
October 22-23, 2010 – Hotel North II, Goose Bay
Branches Attending: Churchill Falls, Coastal Labrador South, Labrador West, Lake Melville, Nutak Labradorimi

Group 3 – St. John's
October 29-30, 2010 – Capital Hotel, St. John's
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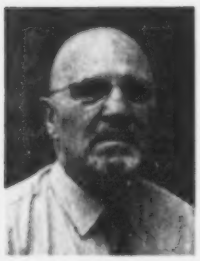
October 29-30, 2010 – Capital Hotel, St. John's
Branches Attending: Baccalieu, Bay Roberts, Carbonear, Marconi, Placentia, Upper Trinity South



Career Home Balance – Finding Time for Self

by ROSS FLOOD

Dr. Linda Duxbury at Carlton University is one of Canada's leading workplace health researchers. She has written hundreds of papers, journals, and books, and is the co-author of a series of influential Health Canada reports about work-life balance in Canada. Dr. Duxbury's research which confirms the traditional view that work and family life are mutually exclusive domains is being challenged. Work-home conflict is becoming an increasingly important concern for Canadian workers, unions and employers. Unions are pushing for more resources, reduced workloads and hours of work, and improved leave provisions in "family-friendly" bargaining rounds. Pushed by stressed out members, management and unions are making work overload and quality of time top-priority issues at the negotiating table in this country. The work-family conflict occurs when an individual has to perform multiple roles such as worker, volunteer, spouse and parent. These multiple role conflicts can potentially affect all workers, and is referred to as work-life conflict, work-home or career-home conflict.

According to the Vanier Institute for the Family, work-home balance is an increasingly essential component of life as in 67% of Canadian families both parents work at least part-time. Many families still have children or young adults at home and care for or arrange care for elderly parents, the "sandwich generation". Economics, support to children's education, family finances, job security and the competing demands from jobs, family and community stress all families. Many employers are now concerned with work-family issues for both humanitarian and practical reasons. Employees are human and they all have issues outside the workplace – they bring those concerns to work and conversely bring work issues home.

Teachers may need assistance on how to maintain an effective balance, as well as how to be aware of your own warning signs that you need a break. A regular school day may see you dashing from one classroom to another, grabbing a break, dealing with problems during bus or lunch duty, and dealing with the demands of class preparation and correcting exams. You may also feel that you often take on too much, trying to be perfect and fill every spare moment of the teaching day. Other elements that influence work-life balance are a sense of control or influence over your work environment, physical and emotional well-being and having the common will and support of employers and peers to ensure that all staff have a reasonable work-life balance. If this is you, the tips and ideas in this article may help you to regain the balance in your life, or fine tune areas of your life to create moments to relax.

What does work/career and life balance look like? Teachers in balance can be identified by the following behaviors:

- You have enough time for family and work;
- When something in your life breaks down (babysitter is sick; car breaks down, illness in the family) you have the resources and time to deal with it;
- You are on the path you want to be, both professionally and personally;
- Organizations and employers are prepared to accommodate employees' desire to have a life outside work and school;
- Employers attempt to accommodate employees' needs for increased flexibility and a supportive work environment, within the context of collective agreements;
- Teachers exercise control over those aspects of their life they can influence in the three domains of work, family and leisure;
- Teachers have personal time available daily for leisure activities that provide fun, exercise and diversion from work and home;
- Balance is not a constant; it comes and goes as things change. Life experience, career and job expectations, family roles and your stage in life all affect work-life balance.

Managing your work/life balance

Having time for yourself/leisure, work, and family commitments are the elements of an effective home balance. It is a sense of being in control, being content, focused and achieving goals, while also feeling relaxed and calm enough to cope with changing or challenging situations. To have effective balance, you need awareness of your own warning signs: understanding what may be jeopardizing your health and well-being and clarify what you need to do. Then, you have the time to relax and recharge so that you can work at your best.

Monitoring your pressure valves – the warning signs

You can monitor the warning signs by observing your own feelings, thoughts and behavioral changes. You may show signs of becoming tired and irritable when out of balance, and this affects those around you. Often your thinking, communication and performance suffers, and concentration and attention span are impacted. You can be prone to making mistakes and work performance and quality can be adversely affected. Generally feeling low, poor self-esteem and self-confidence and chronic illness can often be other warning signs of being off balance. Some people rely on alcohol use and increased smoking or increased eating as coping mechanisms, which will not help in the long term.

Changing your thinking

Changing your coping skills often leads to more control and finding time for relaxation are techniques to improve work-life balance. Changing your thoughts from negative to more positive and focusing on your overall achievements and not your failures are ways to start becoming more positive and less stressed about the classroom. Start looking at what you have achieved during each school day, and valuing what you do, rather than thinking negatively of what you have not been able to accomplish.

Creating moments to relax

Creating precious moments to relax involves developing a reserve of activities and strategies that you can call upon in busy times to regain control and influence your ability to work at your best. It involves taking time every day to look after yourself, including healthy eating, time for leisure, friends and exercise. The following ideas from an article that first appeared in *Teaching Expertise*, July 2004 (http://teachingexpertise.com/articles/life-beyond-classroom-672) provide techniques on creating work-life balance:

• If you take work home, set times when you will deal with this and be strict about it. Don't get distracted and then allow the work to drag on all night/weekend. Make sure you have a 'stop time' so that you can relax.

• Gradually build time for yourself. Once you've built up 10 minutes 'for me', try to increase this time to 20 minutes and then spend 30 minutes just doing nothing. If you can, let your mind drift.

• Clear your desk at the end of the day and be less hassled when you get in the next day.

• Ban sticky notes from your desk. You'll be distracted and react to them, rather than completing anything.

• Refuse to argue over small things. It's a waste of time to bicker and causes more stress in the end.

From an article titled *Time to Relax and Recharge* (http://teachingexpertise.com/articles/time-relax-re-charge-677), other tips that teachers can use to enhance their work-life balance include:

• Commit to leaving school on time at least 2-3 days each week. This will enable you to slowly get into a new and more positive habit.

• If involved in extra curricular activities, don't over extend yourself. Gain and maintain time for yourself – learn to say no!

• Getting relaxed can be as simple as taking a 10-minute walk or doing something different before starting the next major task ahead of you.

• Exercise is usually the first thing to be eliminated when we feel pressured, yet it is one of the most important aspects to maintaining your balance.

• Take a mental timeout through visualizing or guided imagery, which has the effect of creating a healthy pause or brain-break, allowing your mind time to assimilate information.

Survival tips

You can create more time to relax and recharge by being more organized and effective in how you manage your time and asking friends and colleagues for help. Sharing ideas and concerns with others creates a sounding board to resolve issues faster. This allows you more time to focus on what really matters to you. Determine what is really important and which aspects of your work and life you can influence, discarding those things you cannot control or are really of little importance to you. Organize home life to simplify activities, and have everyone in the household help and share the jobs that need to be done. Prioritize what matters most to you in relation to your work and family. When you indulge in the things that you enjoy you can begin to re-charge yourself and start improving your work-life balance.

Ross Flood is a coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for Teachers. For confidential assistance contact Ross Flood (ext. 242) or Judy Beranger (ext. 265).

What Kind of Fool Am I?

by BEVERLEY PARK

After forty days of no bread, on Easter Sunday I finally treated myself to the finest baguette I could find! It was sinfully good with gobs of butter! Yes, I am one of these people who torture myself by giving up something I love for the forty days of Lent. That surprises most people who know me because I could not be described, by any stretch of the imagination, as religious – and the tradition of fasting has its origin in religion. So, I have been asked time and time again why I bother with this self-denial. Truth is, I do it because I have always done it. One day as I responded and heard those words come out of my mouth, I realized that I was articulating something that I most often speak against…doing things just because they've always been done. Before I go any further, I should say firstly that while I may not be religious, I do respect others' beliefs and, more importantly, their right to hold those beliefs. Secondly, I am a strong supporter of tradition. So, this Lenten fast has stirred up a debate: me against myself!

"We need to always be questioning. Once we have examined why we do what we do, our practice becomes more deliberate, more intentional, and I believe, better."

In this age of hyper-individualism our traditions can help us connect, to see ourselves as historical beings with roots in the past – to our families, our ancestors, our communities. Traditions, after all, were originally ideas or practices which people wanted to preserve for a valued reason. Just because we may have forgotten what those reasons are doesn't necessarily mean that we should throw out the practices. As the wise Tevye said in the now famous musical, "Without our traditions, our lives would be as shaky as a fiddler on the roof." He also says later, "If you ask how did this tradition start, I'll tell you, I don't know…but it's still a tradition." What's wrong with making a wish and hopefully throwing a coin into a fountain? We might not know why, but no harm done! The same could go for the clinking of glasses in the offering of a toast.

Maybe I can't tell you the origin of Lenten fasting, but I remember that as a kid I was encouraged to give up sweets for the forty days after Good Friday. When Easter rolled around, the treats were always more appreciated. Now I think of it as a link or a salute to my mother who, right up to the time she died, gave up something – often bread and/or butter. Traditions can be a kind of glue that holds families, communities and cultures together in a positive way. They stand the test of time and have an inherent "goodness" about them.

But it isn't always so. Other traditions do not hold up to questioning. And question we should.

Knowing their impact, I often use stories in my workshops for illustrative purposes. Being a cat lover, the story of the Guru's cat is one of my favourites. In brief, it is the story of a certain Guru who was distracted by the ashram cat as he tried to worship. He solved the problem by ordering that the cat be tied up during those times. Eventually the Guru died. His successor may not have been distracted by the cat, however, it continued to be tied up during worship. When the original cat also died, another cat was brought in to be tied up – and so on it went – Guru after Guru, cat after cat! Over time the tying up of the cat had become a tradition, something which was done without question although no one remembered why. The practice itself had no intrinsic meaning at all. Originally it was an attempt to safeguard the reverence of the worship but that fact was lost over time. However, in documenting the observances of faith, scholars even wrote treatises on the religious significance of a cat being bound during worship. This arose because people continued to do as they had always done. Asking, and finding out the truth, in this case, would have revealed that there was no significance to the worship rituals. It would have exposed the foolishness of the practice and more importantly, saved a few cats from undignified bondage.

If we take this concept of questioning tradition in the context of schools, as teachers we might well ask why certain things are the way they are. In one

junior/senior high school I heard of (in another province), there was a rule that students in the junior division could not buy pop from vending machines. Yet, a corridor away the seniors had access to several pop vendors. The consequence was a thriving black market in the corridor dividing them! There may very well have been a good reason for the rule originally but something may have changed over time that suggests a need to re-examine this before it becomes a tradition.

So, what traditions (rules) in your school or in your own teaching practice could do with a little scrutiny? Have you forgotten why you do certain things? Are there some traditions which are inherently good even if you can't remember or can't find out why? Does the reason why, the origin of the tradition, hold up even now, confirming the practice? Or is it the cat in your ashram?

I have looked back over my own teaching and my experience here at the NLTA as a member of staff and I can think of examples for each of those scenarios. I challenge you to do the same. We need to be always questioning. Once we have examined why we do what we do, our practice becomes more deliberate, more intentional, and I believe, better.

So, which of the Beverleys has won the debate… well, neither really. We have resolved that nothing is all good; and nothing is all bad. Someone once said, "There are two kinds of fools: one who says this is old and therefore good; and another who says this is new and therefore better." I don't believe the new pop phrase "It's all good." We need to truly find out what is good – old or new – and make that the foundation for what we do.

Despite the fact that I can still have debates with myself, "we" have consensus on one thing: There's no good reason for tying up cats – even if you think you know why!

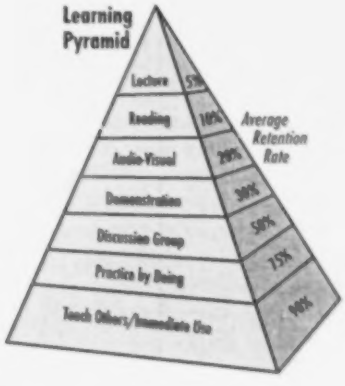
Beverley Park is Senior Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.

21st Century Learning… What? How? Where?

by JIM MURPHY

According to edorigami.org, today's students are more collaborative as well as being more informative, media and technology savvy. They are creative, adaptive and communicative and require immediate and instant gratification. (http://edorigami.wikispaces.com/21st+Century+Teacher) This being said, the nature of the learner has changed substantially, and it demands a new skill set from teachers; one that, according to edorigami.org, should include the following: adaptability, visionary, collaboration, risk taking, learning, communicating, modeling and leadership. As good teachers, we already possess these skills in varying degrees. The question remains, then, is how we can help students to learn more and better? What 21st Century strategies can we apply to our trade to better engage our learners?

The following graphic represents the ways which we teach and the average retention rate. This learning pyramid could be applied to learning in any century, but, if nothing else, it certainly exemplifies the need to recognize learning styles and utilize a variety of resources and strategies to engage learners.



www.csus.edu/indiv/m/mackj/chem1a/images/pyramid.gif

David Sousa (2001), in his book entitled *How the Brain Learns*, also indicates that teaching methods that involve students in the learning process increase retention rates. He indicates the same percentage as those in the graphic: that students remember as much as 90% of information they teach others and 75% of what they practice by doing. Contrarily, they only remember 10% of what they read and 5% of what they hear in a lecture. Interestingly enough, the original studies at the National Training Laboratories in Bethel, Maine, from which this graphic was derived, cannot be located and so some critical literacy is suggested here. But one thing does hold true; retention does depend to a great extent on teaching strategies. Therefore, our challenge in this century is to deliver curriculum in ways that address learning styles by using tools and technologies that will engage today's learners.

So, what are some of these 21st Century teaching tools and strategies? How can we engage our 21st Century learners?

I will outline some of the more common tools and strategies. But, to truly render justice to what is actually available, you would be best served to complete some web searches of your own.

Strategies and Tools

Before starting in on strategies, the following is a great reminder of what we need to consider as we develop plans.

1. Know your subject – Curriculum guidelines, materials, and supplements;
2. Know your students – Instructional strategies for 21st Century students' strengths, weaknesses, interests and learning styles; and
3. Know your strategy – "We don't plan to fail, we fail to plan"

(From: Teaching 21st Century Students)

In terms of tools at your disposal, you may want to explore the following slide show of the top 100 tools of 2009. (www.slideshare.net/janehart/top-100-

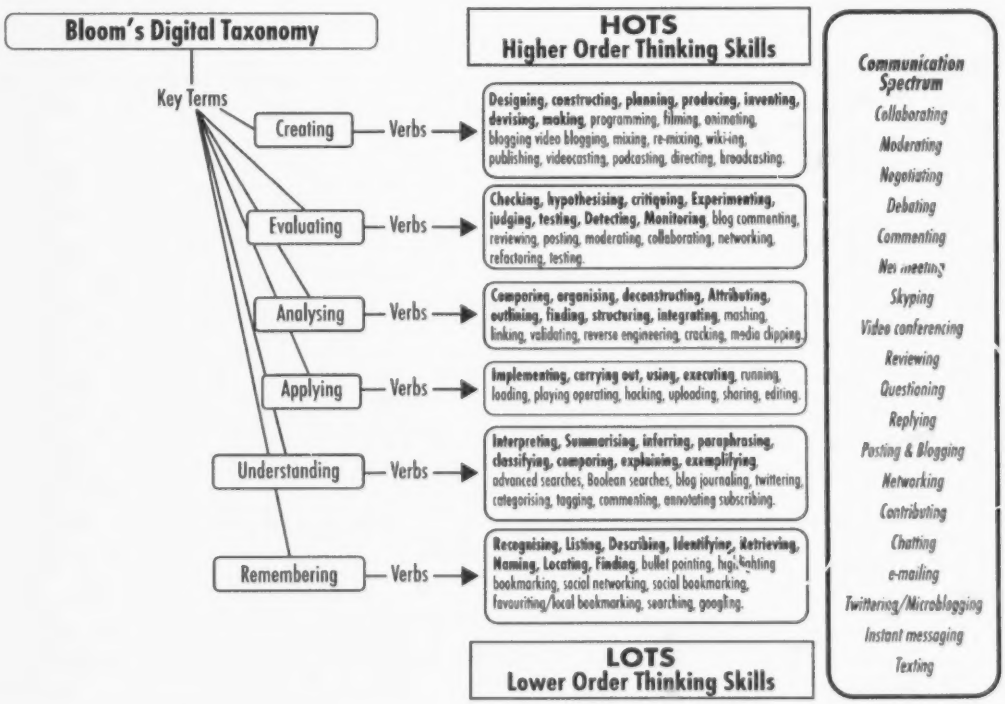
tools-for-learning-2009-2509241) Many of these tools are free, downloadable or web accessible and will certainly enhance the classroom experience for your students. Coupled with some engaging strategies, you can create a 21st Century learning experience.

Then, familiarize yourself with the graphic in Figure 1 from http://edorigami.wikispaces.com that applies Bloom's Taxonomy to digital media. The original terms are bolded and followed by terms indigenous to the digital domain. Without diving too deeply into all the items in this schema, some of the terms and related strategies will be highlighted in the remainder of the article; in particular, the activities in the higher order areas will be investigated.

Analyzing

Any activities here that require the manipulation, organization, structuring of data would be useful. In terms of tools, use Excel, Google Docs or graphic organizers to organize data collected in practically any subject area. Use the collected data to teach organization, comparison, outlining, structuring or any of the analytical skills underlined in the taxonomy. This would be especially useful in math and science curriculum, particularly in the area of statistics and probability. But, it could easily be applied to language arts or social studies curriculum where learners are required to analyze, compare and contrast a variety of data. Students then build presentations to share findings and demonstrate understanding. They can also post findings to a wiki or on the school network's intranet. Use grouping strategies and graphic organizers and prefabricated charts to accommodate all learning styles and no one group necessarily has to use the same data set or the same instruments. The organization and interpretation of data and information is a critical 21st Century skill and, according to Marzano in *Classroom Instruction That Works*, is a highly effective teaching strategy. For example, he states, "Representing similarities and differences in graphic or symbolic form enhances students' understanding of and ability to use knowledge" (p.16) Given opportunities to be creative and work collaboratively, many students will be more interested in the content, will become more engaged in the process and will inevitably create a superior product.

Figure 1



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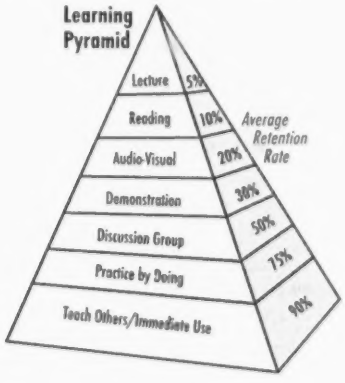

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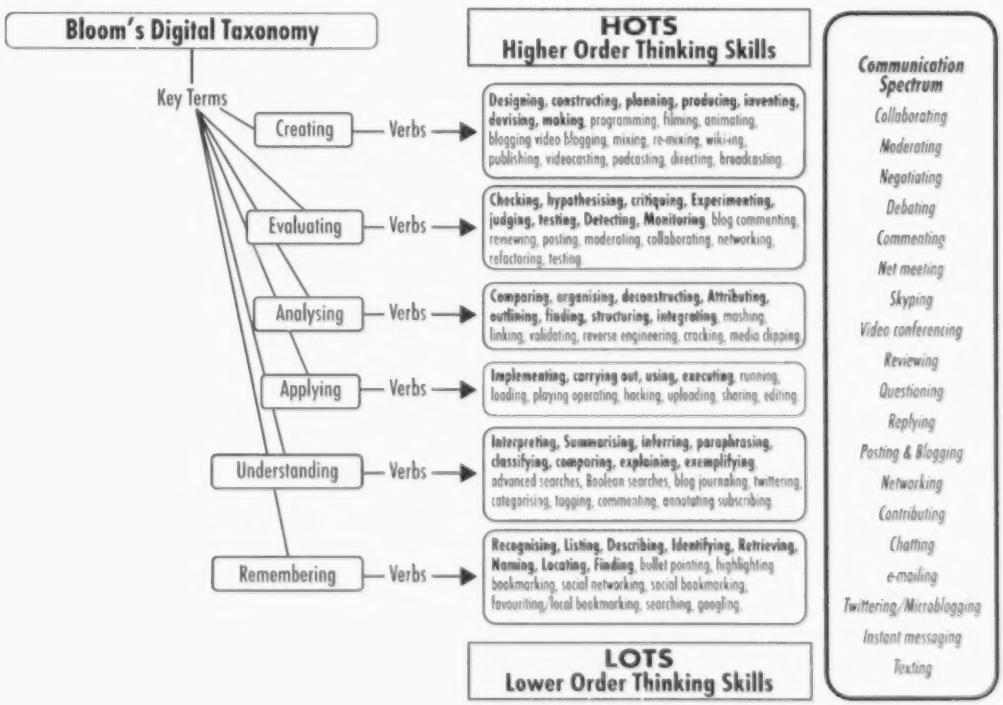

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Evaluating

Evaluating, judging, critiquing, hypothesizing; all aspects of this thinking skill. Developing reflective practices and critical thinking skills are significant to the 21st Century learner, but they are done in different ways; ways that are more appealing to our digital natives, who are literally inundated with technology, images, video from a multitude of multimedia rich sources.

We need to harness those digital resources to engage our digital students. As per the taxonomy graphic, blog commenting, reviewing (films, novels, video games, etc...), posting (to a forum), moderating or collaborating through a variety of networks will challenge students to think critically and judge critically. Planning is essential. If you are to embed activities such as blog (text or video blogs) commenting or discussion forum posting into your curriculum, you will have to find appropriate blogs, create your own, or have students create and comment on one another's blogs. In language arts and social sciences for example, using these digital mediums needs to be an integral component. Furthermore, digital literacy, the ability to locate, organize, understand, evaluate, and create information using digital technology (Digital Literacy, 2010), needs to be addressed across all curriculum and integrated into our pedagogy. In terms of strategies, make the learning "fun" and relevant to the student's world. Try increasing the speed of instruction and changing instructional approaches so they can receive information faster. With the power of the web available in most of our learning areas, use it to bring more sound, more images, more graphical representation and more video into your practice than simple text or notes. Organize your instruction so that it is more collaborative than prescriptive. Lastly, give students opportunities to reflect on learning and construct learning using integrated technologies.

Creating

Creating content to share can be a complicated process. Here are some tools that will quickly allow students to create interesting products that allow them to demonstrate learning by synthesizing their new knowledge. In terms of engaging strategies for using these tools, consider planning your teaching with the end in mind. That is, what is the product at the end of the learning sequence? What will the student create and share to indicate mastery of the desired outcomes? Will it be a film, a short presentation, a series of screen captures with voiceovers, an animation, a photo story, digital storytelling or a podcast?

From a curriculum perspective, any curriculum would allow for project-based product development. In math, for example, consider using a simple screen capture using a microphone and a product called Jing (www.jingproject.com/) that captures screen and audio at once and converts it to shareable video formats. Students could use this to explain their rational in problem solving. It could be done as a group activity. It would require planning, collaboration, group contribution and a great deal of creativity to produce. But the final products would be phenomenal! The extension, of course, is to archive the captured explanations and make them available to next year's class via the school intranet or other online sharing space such as YouTube or Google Docs, or a Ning network, the neighbouring school, the district, the province and...I think you get the point. They would then become reusable learning objects that can benefit all. Here are some products that you may want to access to engage your 21st Century learners and allow them to create, to and share: (These are the free ones! There are many more commercial products available)

Product	Location
Windows Moviemaker	With Windows Operating Systems
Animoto	http://animoto.com/ – takes images and mixes them with sound and transitions and text
Photostory	www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/PhotoStory/default.mspx - digital storytelling from your desktop
Audacity	http://audacity.sourceforge.net/
SlideShare	www.slideshare.net – a sharing place for your presentations
YouTube	http://youtube.com – for video storage and retrieval (Try TeacherTube if YouTube is blocked.)
Ning	http://ning.com – Create your own social/sharing network or join existing networks
Blogger	www.blogger.com (a Google service)
Google Docs	http://docs.google.com – free and powerful!
Flickr	www.flickr.com – (photo sharing)
Jing	www.jingproject.com/ – screen and video capture
Wiki Creation	www.wikspaces.com
Social Publishing	www.scribd.com/ – Publish any document, access published documents

Conclusion

I know you recognize that there is a great deal more personal investment required to use new strategies and new tools. It takes time, practice and patience.

Time is essential and at a premium. However, when I devise an activity using technology and integrating technology and it is successful, I know I can adapt it to other classes and to other grade levels. I can revise it, archive it, share it and collaborate with others on it so I can receive feedback and improve it. When my colleagues, in turn, do the same, the network grows and the available resources grow exponentially. It takes practice to use these tools and to change strategies. Using graphic organizers, cooperative learning, multiple intelligences, brain-based learning, DI and subsequently using digital mediums to support the learning to shape new learning experiences for students will take some time to perfect. If you are already comfortable with using a variety of strategies in your pedagogy and you are integrating digital literacies, then share your best practices with others! Otherwise, baby steps work best and the 21st Century learners in front of you will support you and will feel more engaged. And, finally, patience... grasshopper.

Kung Fu www.digitallard.com/moviereview/420/

Jim Murphy is Coordinator of the Virtual Teacher Centre.

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Evaluating

Evaluating, judging, critiquing, hypothesizing; all aspects of this thinking skill. Developing reflective practices and critical thinking skills are significant to the 21st Century learner, but they are done in different ways; ways that are more appealing to our digital natives, who are literally inundated with technology, images, video from a multitude of multimedia rich sources.

We need to harness those digital resources to engage our digital students. As per the taxonomy graphic, blog commenting, reviewing (films, novels, video games, etc...), posting (to a forum), moderating or collaborating through a variety of networks will challenge students to think critically and judge critically. Planning is essential. If you are to embed activities such as blog (text or video blogs) commenting or discussion forum posting into your curriculum, you will have to find appropriate blogs, create your own, or have students create and comment on one another's blogs. In language arts and social sciences for example, using these digital mediums needs to be an integral component. Furthermore, digital literacy, the ability to locate, organize, understand, evaluate, and create information using digital technology (Digital Literacy, 2010), needs to be addressed across all curriculum and integrated into our pedagogy. In terms of strategies, make the learning "fun" and relevant to the student's world. Try increasing the speed of instruction and changing instructional approaches so they can receive information faster. With the power of the web available in most of our learning areas, use it to bring more sound, more images, more graphical representation and more video into your practice than simple text or notes. Organize your instruction so that it is more collaborative than prescriptive. Lastly, give students opportunities to reflect on learning and construct learning using integrated technologies.

Creating

Creating content to share can be a complicated process. Here are some tools that will quickly allow students to create interesting products that allow them to demonstrate learning by synthesizing their new knowledge. In terms of engaging strategies for using these tools, consider planning your teaching with the end in mind. That is, what is the product at the end of the learning sequence? What will the student create and share to indicate mastery of the desired outcomes? Will it be a film, a short presentation, a series of screen captures with voiceovers, an animation, a photo story, digital storytelling or a podcast?

From a curriculum perspective, any curriculum would allow for project-based product development. In math, for example, consider using a simple screen capture using a microphone and a product called Jing (www.jingproject.com/) that captures screen and audio at once and converts it to shareable video formats. Students could use this to explain their rational in problem solving. It could be done as a group activity. It would require planning, collaboration, group contribution and a great deal of creativity to produce. But the final products would be phenomenal! The extension, of course, is to archive the captured explanations and make them available to next year's class via the school intranet or other online sharing space such as YouTube or Google Docs, or a Ning network, the neighbouring school, the district, the province and...I think you get the point. They would then become reusable learning objects that can benefit all. Here are some products that you may want to access to engage your 21st Century learners and allow them to create, to and share: (These are the free ones! There are many more commercial products available)

Product	Location
Windows Moviemaker	With Windows Operating Systems
Animoto	http://animoto.com/ – takes images and mixes them with sound and transitions and text
Photostory	www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/PhotoStory/default.mspx - digital storytelling from your desktop
Audacity	http://audacity.sourceforge.net/
SlideShare	www.slideshare.net – a sharing place for your presentations
YouTube	http://youtube.com – for video storage and retrieval (Try TeacherTube if YouTube is blocked.)
Ning	http://ning.com – Create your own social/sharing network or join existing networks
Blogger	www.blogger.com (a Google service)
Google Docs	http://docs.google.com – free and powerful!
Flickr	www.flickr.com – (photo sharing)
Jing	www.jingproject.com/ – screen and video capture
Wiki Creation	www.wikspaces.com
Social Publishing	www.scribd.com/ – Publish any document, access published documents

Conclusion

I know you recognize that there is a great deal more personal investment required to use new strategies and new tools. It takes time, practice and patience.

Time is essential and at a premium. However, when I devise an activity using technology and integrating technology and it is successful, I know I can adapt it to other classes and to other grade levels. I can revise it, archive it, share it and collaborate with others on it so I can receive feedback and improve it. When my colleagues, in turn, do the same, the network grows and the available resources grow exponentially. It takes practice to use these tools and to change strategies. Using graphic organizers, cooperative learning, multiple intelligences, brain-based learning, DI and subsequently using digital mediums to support the learning to shape new learning experiences for students will take some time to perfect. If you are already comfortable with using a variety of strategies in your pedagogy and you are integrating digital literacies, then share your best practices with others! Otherwise, baby steps work best and the 21st Century learners in front of you will support you and will feel more engaged. And, finally, patience... grasshopper.

Kung Fu www.digitallard.com/moviereview/420/

Jim Murphy is Coordinator of the Virtual Teacher Centre.

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21st Century Learning – Digital Learners (Part III) (www.youtube.com/watch?v=uEDullnv9rE)

21st Century Learning Matters (www.youtube.com/watch?v=2L2XwWq4_BY)

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Calendar

ICED 2010: 21ST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON THE EDUCATION OF THE DEAF

July 18-22, 2010

Vancouver, BC. Check the Congress website at www.ICED2010.com for updates on registration and hotel information, keynote and International Summit presenter biographies; social activities and post Congress Alaskan cruise.

DYSLEXIA: SIGNS, SYMPTOMS AND SOLUTIONS

September 25, 2010

Harbourview Ballroom, Delta Hotel and Conference Centre, St. John's. Presented by the Council of Special Services and the NLTA. Presenter: Sally Shearman, Ontario Branch of the International Dyslexia Association. Early bird registration deadline: June 24, 2010. Registration form is posted on the NLTA website (www.nlta.nl.ca) under Professional Development Opportunities. For more information contact Keith Adey, Council of Special Services, Tel: 709-489-6481; keithadey@nf.sympatico.ca

EDGE CONFERENCE 2010

October 12-15, 2010

Delta Hotel, St. John's. *E-Learning: The Horizon and Beyond.* An international conference on the Use of Technologies in K-12 and Post-Secondary Education. For the Call for Papers and conference details visit www.mun.ca/edge2010.

Dates to Remember

June 2010

June 15	**Deadline:** Notification by board of acceptance/rejection of Deferred Salary Leave requests
June 17	**Deadline:** PD Fund applications

July 2010

July 31	**Deadline:** NLTA Scholarship Applications

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New from the NLTA in Fall 2010

FINANCIAL INFORMATION SEMINARS FOR TEACHERS

The NLTA will be introducing this pilot project in Fall 2010 in the St. John's, Gander and Corner Brook areas.

Please watch the June 2010 issue of *The Bulletin* and the NLTA website for further details.